GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5749
ANSWERED ON:07.04.2017
MR Vaccination
Chowdhary Shri Pankaj

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

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(a) whether there is an apprehension of occurrence of several types of risks in pregnant women and congenital disorders in unborn babies due to rubella as result of measles-rubella vaccine administered in the Government administered vaccination drive;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Government proposes to develop any technique to keep the pregnant women and the unborn babies safe from rubella as a result of measles-rubella vaccine and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)

(a) & (b): No, there is no such apprehension. Rubella infection during early pregnancy can lead to abortion, miscarriage, still birth, and set of congenital anomalies in the foetus and newborns known as Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS), which is characterized by multiple defects, particularly affecting the eyes (glaucoma, cataract), ears (hearing loss), brain (microcephaly, mental retardation) and heart.
The measles-rubella vaccine being administered in the Government administered vaccination drive, in fact, provides protection from rubella and congenital rubella syndrome.

(c): In order to provide protection from rubella, the Government is introducing rubella vaccine as measles-rubella (MR) vaccine in the Universal Immunization programme (UIP) through a campaign in a phased manner, targeting children in the age group of 9 months upto 15 years of age across the country. Following the campaign, MR vaccine will be available under routine immunization, replacing the currently given two doses of measles vaccine, at 9- 12 months and 16-24 months of age of child.